

The Porter Court-Martial.

Washington, Friday, Jan. 2, 1863.

In the Porter Court-Martial, to-day, the Court having called on Gen. Porter to bring forward his witnesses, he said the first one whose evidence he most needed was Col. Marshall, who then lay ill at a neighboring hotel. The question was raised as to the propriety of adjourning to the invalid's room, which was decided affirmatively by the Judge Advocate. The members then proceeded to the hotel, where the Court was reopened in the charge of Col. Marshall.

Col. Marshall was sworn, and testified that he was Colonel of the 13th New-York Volunteer, attached to Gen. Morell's division, and a Captain in the regular service; also that on the afternoon of August 29 he had been detailed by Porter to deploy skirmishers and feel the position of the enemy near the line of the Manassas River. He stated all he knew of the enemy's force on that day, who seemed to come from the direction of Thoroughfare Gap. He supposed them to have been twelve thousand or Porter's force. He thought it was impossible for Porter to have attacked the right wing of Jackson, with whom another portion of the Rebel army was at the same time fighting Pope, since the direct road thereto was blocked up by the enemy in front, and the other roads were impassable by reason of dense woods and the rugged nature of the country. The only path that Porter could take would have been a backward one, which was of course impracticable under the circumstances, though he had achieved it by a route on the following day.

TESTIMONY OF GEN. MCCLELLAN.

He commanded the Army of the Potomac from Aug. 1861 until the battle of Bull Run in 1861 up to the end of August, 1862.

Q. Did Gen. Porter command a corps in that army? If yes, at what time?

A. He served in that army from sometime in the month of September, 1861, first as commander of a division, and then as commander of a corps, from about the end of April to the beginning of May, 1862.

Q. When did the Army of the Potomac reach Aquia Creek?

A. It marched by detachments during the latter part of August.

Q. Have you knowledge of any efforts made by Gen. Porter for the purpose of moving with his own command in order to reach Aquia Creek to join Gen. Pope?

A. I have.

Q. Please state them.

A. Immediately after the commencement of the movement for evacuating Harrison's Bar, Gen. Porter was instructed to remove his corps to the vicinity of Williamsburg, holding a position in front of it, so as to be able to support either wing of the army if attacked; while there he received information from couriers and intercepting letters, showing that the Rebel troops in the vicinity of Richmond were moving upon Gen. Pope, and immediately, without waiting for further instructions from me, he moved his command with the utmost rapidity to Newport News to embark; while at Newport News he used every effort to facilitate the embarkation of his command for Aquia Creek.

Q. Did he know that the object of that movement on his part was to go as quick as possible to the assistance of Gen. Pope?

A. He did.

Q. At what time did he get off from Newport News?

A. I think he embarked in person on the 20th of August. I could not tell certainly without reference to papers and documents.

A dispatch was handed to the witness and the question was ask'd if that document refreshed his recollection. The following is the dispatch alluded to:

Gen. George M. McClellan, Va., Aug. 21—11 a.m.—1862.

Please pass my thanks without any trouble to your agents for the very pressing & master of his & our Army. Your promptness is much appreciated, and when you next meet me, I will assure you of my thanks.

GEN. G. E. MCCELLAN, Major-General.

To Maj. Gen. F. J. Porter.

After reading this paper and acknowledging its authority, Gen. McClellan said: "To the best of my knowledge and belief on the evening of the 20th of August,

Q. That order, as we understand it, was executed to your satisfaction?

A. Entirely so.

Q. You have stated that the first movement which he made for the purpose of getting to Newport News was without orders from you, was it not necessary to order at that time?

A. It was departing from the letter of instructions I had given him; I should say, however, in explanation of that, Gen. Porter sent me a telegram, perhaps two stating that he would move up early, if I did not, so, some delay, I did not receive these dispatches until after he had started, but I fully approved of his course in doing what he did.

Q. Was the effect of that movement to expedite his arrival at Aquia Creek?

A. Very decidedly—in fact, one day, if not more.

Q. After he left Newport News with his command, when did you see him, if at all, afterward?

A. At Aquia Creek.

Q. How long was he there under your immediate supervision?

A. I think from 24 to 36 hours between there and Falmouth.

Q. Did you see him after he left Falmouth until the campaign was at an end?

A. No, Sir.

Q. From what you saw of his conduct, or from anything that you may have heard from him, did he know that he was to go to the assistance of Gen. Pope, did he do all in your opinion that an energetic, zealous and patriotic officer could have done?

A. I think he did.

Q. Had you any reason at any time after he received notice that he was to go to the assistance of Gen. Pope, to believe that he would fail Gen. Pope or the country?

A. None whatever.

Q. Do you remember whether you received from Gen. Burnside, after Gen. Porter joined the command, or was about to join the command of Gen. Pope, any dispatches that he had received from Gen. Porter?

A. I received several, the exact number I do not know—perhaps three or four—forwarded by Gen. Burnside from Falmouth.

Q. To yourself?

A. The copies, I think, were addressed both to Gen. Halleck and myself.

Gen. M. Clegg had examined the various dispatches referred to in which Gen. Porter commands upon the manner in which the Virginia campaign had been conducted, and acknowledged them to be the same he had received.

Q. Did you, from the telegrams you so received, form an impression that Gen. Porter would not be true to his duty to Gen. Pope?

A. I did not.

Q. Will you do me the favor to look at this paper (handing it to him), and say whether you send that dispatch?

A. I do. (The dispatch alluded to is the one sent by Gen. McClellan to Gen. Porter, Sept. 1, 1862, asking the latter to do all in his power to assist Gen. Pope.)

Q. As you have already stated that you never entertained a doubt that Gen. Porter would be true to Gen. Pope in that campaign, how came you to send such a dispatch as that?

A. I sent it in accordance with a request from the President of the United States, who sent for me on that day, and told me that he understood that there was an undialled feeling on the part of the Army of the Potomac toward Gen. Pope, and requested me to use my personal influence to correct it by telegraphing either to Gen. Porter, or to any other of my friends there; I told him that I did not consider it necessary, but was perfectly willing to do it; I had no doubt then in my own mind but that the Army of the Potomac, and all connected with it, would do their duty without the necessity of any action on my part.

Q. I understand you to say, then, that you sent the telegram to quiet the apprehensions of the President, and not to remove any apprehensions of your own?

A. Entirely so.

Examination by the Judge advocate.

Q. This dispatch, of which you have spoken before 5 p.m., Sept. 1, 1862. Were you not then, or sometime afterward, in command of the defense of Washington?

A. I had been placed in command of the defense of Washington that morning by a verbal order.

Q. Can you recall the hour at which on the following day the order was sent to Gen. Pope to fall back with the defense of Washington?

A. The order did not emanate from me, but my recollection is that it was sent at a very early hour on the morning of the 2d of September.

Q. Did or did not the execution of that order necessitate placing the forces of Gen. Pope himself under your command?

A. As I was directed not to assume any command over the active troops commanded by Gen. Pope, until they reached the immediate vicinity of Wash-

ington, I was expressly excluded from all control over them until then.

Q. Did the President in his conversation with you with respect to the sending of this dispatch, express any impression growing out of mind, or loss of the part of the navy of the Potomac, or on the part of certain officers?

Gen. Halleck—Is it necessary to go into that point, Mr. President? I rather think not.

Mr. Johnson [counsel]—We do not object to it, sir.

Gen. Halleck, insisting on his objection, the Judge Advocate withdrew the question.

The following questions were then propounded by the Court:

Q. At what time did Gen. Porter receive orders to quit Gen. Pope's command?

A. I cannot give the exact date; the order came direct from Gen. Halleck, and had been received by Gen. Porter when I reached Aquia Creek.

Gen. Casey—Are you still in feeling toward Gen. Pope?

A. My acquaintance with Gen. Pope.

Gen. Casey—One moment, I do not see any necessity for that question, Mr. President.

Gen. Halleck—I do not see the connection of that question with the proceedings of this court.

Gen. Casey—If there is no objection, I withdraw the question, as I have no particular desire to push it.

Mr. Johnson [counsel]—As in a question was put by the Court, and the members may have the impression that that withdraws his feelings friendly to Gen. Pope, it is due to him that he should be allowed to answer that question.

Gen. Halleck—Opposition has been made and the question withdrawn.

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